

To: "Allen, Kara" [Kara.Allen@mail.house.gov]

From: "Allen, Kara" <Kara.Allen@mail.house.gov>

Sent: Thur 1/17/2013 2:42:48 PM

Subject: SEEC Daily Clips 1.17.13

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Sustainable Energy & Environment Coalition
January 17, 2013

<http://seec-israel.house.gov/>

Top news stories:

Rep. Paul Tonko of N.Y. replaces Green on critical House subpanel (E&E*)

SEEC Co-Chair Rep. Paul Tonko of New York will replace Rep. Gene Green of Texas as the ranking Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, potentially ushering in a new focus on renewable energy technologies.

Treasury, IRS preparing guidance to clarify renewable credit eligibility (E&E*)

The Treasury Department and IRS are preparing joint guidance to flesh out the implications of a significant tweak to a key renewable energy tax cut that was signed into law this month, an official said yesterday.

Obama Could Look West to Fill Interior Job (National Journal)

President Obama could look west to fill the job of Interior secretary that will become vacant by the end of March with the departure of Ken Salazar. Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire, who supports the president's progressive clean-energy and climate-change agenda, is one possible candidate.

Republicans: Keep carbon tax buried (The Hill)

A group of House Republicans and a senior Democrat want to make sure that carbon tax proposals never gain political momentum. Rep. David McKinley (R-W.Va.), backed by several Republicans and Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.), have introduced a resolution in opposition to imposing fees on fossil energy.

Energy news:

TransCanada says Gulf Coast pipeline construction on schedule (Reuters)

TransCanada Corp said on Wednesday that construction of its \$2.3 billion Gulf Coast Project, which will carry 700,000 barrels per day from the Cushing, Oklahoma, storage hub to Texas refineries is going smoothly and the pipeline is expected to open on schedule by year end.

Falling Renewable Energy Costs Should Force Policy Rethink (CleanTechnica)

A new report from the International Renewable Energy Agency has found that renewable energy has entered what they are calling a "new virtuous cycle of falling costs, increasing deployment, and accelerated technological progress."

Mining group criticizes reports on coal exports (The Hill)

The head of a major mining trade group questioned reports that mining firms might be ducking federal royalty payments. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and ranking member Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) asked the Interior Department earlier this month to investigate coal export practices.

Oil-and-gas lobby sees 'early breakthrough' for offshore royalty bill (The Hill)

The oil-and-gas industry's top lobbyist said a discussed offshore energy revenue-sharing bill could be primed for an "early breakthrough" in the Senate. "I'm optimistic there might be potential there to move some stuff early. And then it begins to set a new framework for common ground for all energy policy," American Petroleum Institute CEO Jack Gerard told reporters at a Wednesday event hosted by the U.S. Energy Association.

North America Shale Oil Boom Will Pressure OPEC to Cut Output (Wall Street Journal)

Increasing output of shale oil in North America will put pressure on OPEC to cut its own crude production, resulting in the biggest global oil supply buffer in more than a decade, a time when prices were far lower, U.K.-listed oil company BP said in its annual energy forecast Wednesday.

Merkel's Offshore Wind-Power Dream for Germany Stalls (Bloomberg)

RWE AG (RWE) is delaying investments. SIAG Nordseewerke GmbH filed for insolvency. REpower Systems SE is cutting temporary staff. All show how German Chancellor Angela Merkel's 550 billion-euro (\$734 billion) plan to replace nuclear reactors with renewable sources is stalling.

Japan plans world's largest wind farm (RenewablesBiz)

Japan is moving away from reliance on nuclear power plants after the Fukushima disaster, and plans to build the world's largest offshore wind farm.

Climate news:

Sweltering Summers To Become The Norm For Nation's Capital, According To New Climate Report (ThinkProgress)

The draft of the Federal Advisory Committee's National Climate Assessment was released several days ago, with dire warnings of significantly higher temperatures across the nation bringing more heat waves, deluges, droughts, and other forms of extreme weather. It also concluded that much of the climate change seen over the last 50 years was primarily driven by human activity.

Keystone XL emissions are underestimated, report says, focusing on petcoke (E&E*)

Carbon dioxide emissions from the proposed Keystone XL pipeline and the Canadian oil sands are far higher than current estimates because of the impact of a byproduct from the oil refining process, according to a new study being released this morning.

Energy, Water, Land Intertwined & Threatened, Says Report (Climate Central)

Water resources, energy and land use are so mutually dependent that climate-related disruptions to any one of them could lead to economically devastating ripple effects.

Solving Global Warming Will Require Far Greater Cuts, and More Wedges, than Thought (MIT Technology Review)

Carbon dioxide emissions need to be reduced far more and far faster than previously thought if a global temperature rise is to be kept under 2 °C, according to a report in Environmental Research Letters. The researchers say that scaling up existing technology won't be good enough to meet the goals. Instead, we need new technological breakthroughs.

Fortified by Global Warming, Deadly Fungus Poisons Corn Crops, Causes Cancer (Scientific American)

Last year's drought increased the spread of a carcinogenic mold called aspergillus (*Aspergillus flavus*), a fungal pathogen that poisons cattle, kills pets and has infected the 2012 corn crop, rendering significant portions of the harvest unfit for consumption.

In Thoreau's Flower Journal, Clues for Climatologists (New York Times)

Until relatively recently, many critics dismissed Thoreau's work as amateurish. Today, however, he is respected not only for his contribution to literature and philosophy but also for his work as a naturalist.

Environment & Health news:

EPA: U.S. air pollution down in 2012 (RenewablesBiz)

Total toxic air releases in 2012 were down 8 percent from the 2010 figure, a survey by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found.

EPA sends power-plant discharge rule to White House (E&E*)

U.S. EPA has sent a proposed rule aimed at curbing discharges of polluted water from power plants to the White House for review. The agency agreed to tighten rules on power plants' discharges of arsenic, lead, chromium, mercury and other toxins under a consent decree with advocacy groups the Environmental Integrity Project, Defenders of Wildlife and the Sierra Club in 2010. The rules have not been updated since 1982.

Coal ash: CRS will revisit controversial assessment (E&E*)

The Congressional Research Service plans to update an analysis of legislation addressing the disposal of power plant combustion waste, a Senate Republican aide said today.

EPA Ethanol-Rule Challenge Won't Be Reconsidered, Judges Say (Bloomberg)

A federal appeals court refused to reconsider a decision to throw out a lawsuit challenging an Environmental Protection Agency rule that allows higher concentrations of corn-based ethanol in gasoline.

Feds withdraw new furnace efficiency standards (St. Louis Post-Dispatch)

The federal government has agreed to withdraw new rules that would require consumers in Missouri, Illinois and more than two dozen other northern states to purchase high-efficiency furnaces beginning this spring.

Fewer Than 10 Environment Reporters Left at Top 5 U.S. Papers (InsideClimate News)

As NYT dismantles its environment desk, increased pressure on a handful of remaining journalists covering complexity of climate change.

Scrap-Metal Plan Proves Radioactive (Wall Street Journal)

The Department of Energy is proposing to allow the sale of tons of scrap metal from government nuclear sites—an attempt to reduce waste that critics say could lead to radiation-tainted belt buckles, surgical implants and other consumer products.

Mead disappointed by new EPA Pavillion extension (Associated Press)

Gov. Matt Mead has joined those expressing disappointment that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has extended for a third time a public comment period on a report on groundwater pollution in a Wyoming gas field rather than moving toward wrapping up the study.

Departing EPA chief: Delivering BP spill fines to Gulf states a proud moment (The Hill)

Outgoing Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lisa Jackson said working on the legislation that will deliver Clean Water Act fines from BP's 2010 oil spill to Gulf Coast states was a high point of her four-year term.

MTBE still a water risk, witness says at ExxonMobil trial (Fuel Fix)

A chemical additive to gasoline meant to make it burn more thoroughly poses a long-term threat of contamination in New Hampshire, a witness testified at the trial of ExxonMobil Corp.

Vitter: 'Political purposes' behind EPA fracking study (The Hill)

Political motives and shoddy science marred a controversial Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study that first linked hydraulic fracturing to water pollution, Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) wrote in a Thursday letter obtained by The Hill.

BP, Justice Department say Gulf plea deal fair and appropriate (Fuel Fix)

BP and federal prosecutors urged a judge Wednesday to approve a criminal plea deal over the 2010 Gulf of Mexico rig explosion and oil spill, amid requests for tougher penalties and poignant family statements from relatives of some of the 11 men who died.

Hearings Set on the Gowanus Cleanup (New York Times)

The federal Environmental Protection Agency plans to hold two public meetings next week on its proposed Superfund cleanup of the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn.

Aquarium Fish Invade California Waters (OurAmazingPlanet)

Tank owners and importers who dump unwanted marine life are introducing tough, non-native species to California waters, says a new report on the state's aquarium trade.

Chevron Subpoenas in Ecuador Suit Challenged in Court (Bloomberg)

Chevron Corp. (CVX), which faces a \$19 billion damage award in an Ecuador environmental case, shouldn't be allowed to obtain information about the e-mail accounts of lawyers, activists and scholars in contact with plaintiff attorneys, a privacy rights group told a judge.

* indicates subscription required

These news clips are intended to be informative and are provided as a courtesy to member offices of the Sustainable Energy & Environment Coalition (SEEC), and others. SEEC is a coalition of forty-four Democratic members of the U.S. House of Representatives that was founded in January 2009 to be a focused, active, and effective coalition for advancing "policies that promote clean energy technology innovation and domestic manufacturing, develop renewable energy resources, and create green collar jobs throughout the product supply-chain, and policies to help arrest global warming and protect our nation's clean air, water and natural environment." SEEC is Co-Chaired by Reps. Steve Israel (D-NY), Paul Tonko (D-NY), and Gerald Connolly (D-Va.). SEEC vice chairs are Reps. Rush Holt (D-NJ), Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Jared Polis (D-CO), and Doris Matsui (D-CA.)

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